The Sketch

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SICILIAN COMMAND FOR CANADA'S YOUNGEST GENERAL, MAJOR-GENERAL SIMONDS.

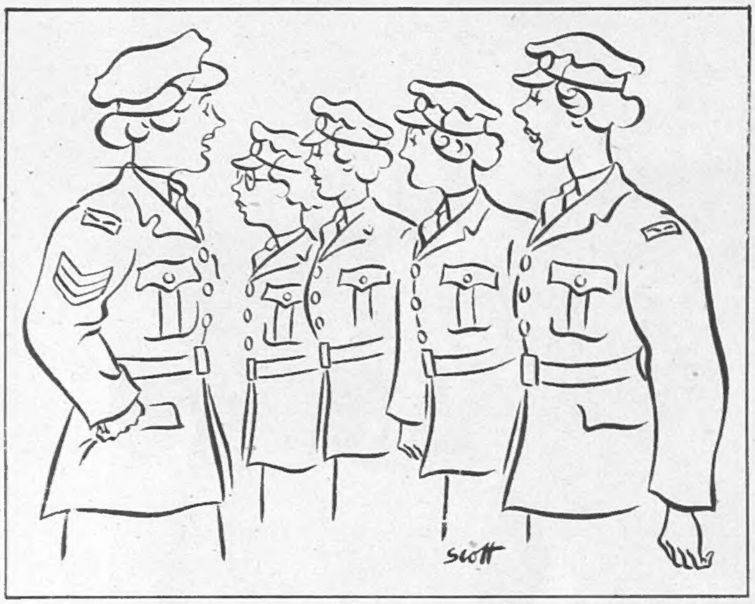
MAJOR-GENERAL GUY SIMONDS, *seen wading ashore at Sicily from a landing-craft, is the new commander of the Canadian forces in the Mediterranean and Sicily. Forty years old, he is the youngest general in the Canadian Army. He was in one of the first contingents to land in Britain in 1939; went to North Africa as a brigadier; fought at the Mareth Line and was in at the fall of Sfax. General Simonds was born at Ixworth Abbey, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, on St. George's Day.*

A

MOTLEY NOTES.

By ALAN KEMP.

Sleight of Hand. There is a boyish playfulness about the Prime Minister which must be very deplorable to serious-minded people like the Germans. You have only to look at the contrast between the superb gesture of Hitler giving the semaphore salute and Mr. Churchill waggishly giving the V-sign to realise the difference between a Herrenvolk



"Well, let 's put it this way . . . who called Flight Sergeant a silly old lady dog?"

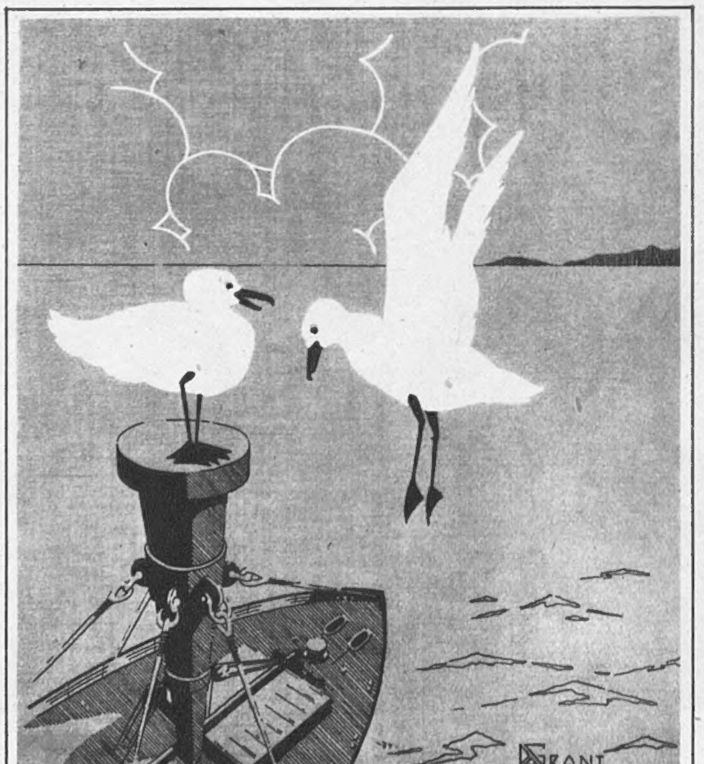
DRAWN BY SCOTT.

and an effete democracy. If any proof is needed that British statesmen simply have no sense of the Importance of being Earnest, the Wilhelmstrasse ought to look at a photograph which lies before me. It shows Mr. Churchill, sombrely arrayed as a Freeman of the City of London (more plutocratic snobbery!), waving a hat on the end of a stick. It is a nice silk hat, more conventional than some of its colleagues on the Downing Street hatstand, and, with respect, I don't think the stick is doing it any good. With his left hand the artiste is making a gesture as if about to extract a gold watch, a silk handkerchief or a pound-note out of the air. It looks to me like a most intriguing performance, and what I want to know is, *what is he going to bring out of that hat next?*

Revised Version. And what is he going to say next? Whatever it is, it will be said as nobody else could say it. As a craftsman of English, Mr. Churchill always repays study. But here again he sometimes permits himself liberties which must give pain to Dr. Goebbels. We all remember "Some chicken, some neck"; and I observe a certain genial cosmopolitanism in the last great "full-dress" speech to the House of Commons on June 30. "I have never felt hustled, or barracked or racketed." "Hustle" is a good English word, but now largely transatlantic by association; "barrack" is pure Australian; and "racket," in this sense, smacks of Broadway or the Loop (Chi., Ill.). This legitimately vigorous vocabulary does not always gain at the hands of reporters, and I was puzzled when I read in one newspaper that Mr. Churchill had never felt hustled, or barracked, or "rocketed." A little later, in the same report, I was incredulous at seeing: "I submit with diffidence and confidence." No, he couldn't have said just that! But that is how the unfortunate reporter, under tyrannous limitations of space, condenses a phrase which actually was: "With diffidence, but with confidence underlying it, I submit . . ." Brevity may be the soul of wit, and the essence of a sub-editor's job, but it is sometimes hard on a stylist or an orator!

Fighting French Without Tears. This language of ours is always causing trouble. What would you make, for example, of the phrase: "Lette eus go tou the pitcheurs"? Or: "Vouat sortt of film dou iou laike"? You would naturally say that these were quotations from the latest of the Advance Guard of poetry who had "discovered" a new technique. You would be wrong. They are the phonetic ways of conveying to the Fighting French in North Africa the important military formulas: "Let us go to the pictures" and "What sort of film do you like?" They are intended to promote better understanding between *les Poilus* and *les Tommies* and *les Sammies*. I did not realise that "Let us go to the pictures" needed any translation or phonetics; I thought it was practically Esperanto, universally understood not only by brothers-in-arms but by sisters-in-arms. I wonder whether the phonetic method as between General de Gaulle and General Giraud would help things along a bit? It might be worth trying.

The Letter Killeth. It is difficult enough for human beings to understand each other when they speak different languages, but it is even worse when they speak different alphabets. Since official communications consist largely of alphabetical symbols, both British and Americans have to learn their A, B, C all over again. It is tough for Tommy to learn that S.O.S. does not mean a cry for help, but Service of Supply (which is not necessarily the same thing), and for the Doughboy to realise that A.T.S. does not stand for Army Transportation Service, but for something much less prosaic. International misunderstandings are liable to occur when a boot becomes a "high shoe" and a garbage or ash can becomes a bin, dust. It is very awkward when a C.G., who is a mere Chaplain-General, is mistaken by our allies for a Commanding General. Still more unfortunate when a B.F., which is, of course, a Bomber Force, is mistaken for something quite different. I am afraid that President Roosevelt is largely responsible for this overworking of the alphabet. Even C.D. is rapidly becoming a matter of ABC and UXB and APB., and in my opinion the whole system of abbreviations is in danger of becoming N.B.G.



"Personally, I always wait for the Old Man himself."

DRAWN BY D. A. GRANT.

Decadence. But these are the least among our handicaps as combatants. Our worst trouble is the old one of degeneracy. Thus, we now know from Dr. Ley that the real villains of our bombing policy are a set of "noble lords,

degenerate to their hair-tips," and that "with God's help" they are going to pay dearly for their sins. Whatever the faults of our aristocracy, I did not know that there was anything specially degenerate about their hair-tips (assuming that they have any), and I am wondering whether this is perhaps a misprint for hare-lips, because that is the sort of wounding, personal thing that Dr. Ley is apt to say. Italian spokesmen, though severe, are rather more dignified, and content themselves with the broad but perturbing statement that one Italian soldier is worth four British Tommies. This makes an awkward problem for our High Command, because it is difficult to see how we are ever going to get enough reinforcements into Sicily to meet the Italians on equal terms. Considering the odds against us up to the present time, even Musso ought to admit that we have put up a stout resistance.

The Brutal British. But we are always learning new truths both about ourselves and about our enemies from Benito. We think we are fairly mild, easy-going people—but listen to this: "All returned prisoners give hair-raising accounts of the perfidious and studied cruelty of the English towards prisoners." I have seen a good many Italian prisoners working on the land, and the cheerfulness with which they endure our perfidious and studied cruelty is simply heroic—so heroic that one has almost gathered the impression that they would rather suffer brutality in Britain than the inspiring leadership of the Duce in Italy. Then again we have always fondly imagined that, as a nation, we are fairly well turned out, and it takes us down a peg or two, not to mention a coupon or two, to learn that "Italy is still the best-dressed country in the world." It must be hard on these European leaders of fashion to be told now by their paternal Government that there is "room for cuts."

Those Wicked Men. Altogether, the Duce is taking a very stern line and is out-Staffording Stafford in some of his ideas of austerity. "The other day I saw that at Rapallo some gentlemen organised a 22-hole golf party. Gentlemen who are interested in 22-hole golf should be sent, and will be sent, to work in the factories and the fields." I want to assure this severe critic that on the rare occasions when I sink to this form of sabotage I *do* work in the fields, and I work very hard, and in terrain which would daunt any agriculturist. However, it cannot be denied that there are still a certain number of degenerates in this country who haunt golf-courses, though I never heard of any who chose the strange number of 22 holes for their Fifth Column activities. Amid all these alarming symptoms, I find a little comfort here and there. Not all Anglo-Saxons seem to be decadent—for example, I observed the other day that in America an athlete of fifty-four ran creditably in his hundredth Marathon. And even in our own degraded democracy, we have it from Mr. Kenneth Lindsay, M.P., that our youth are "fed up with dancing" and demand more vigorous forms of Strength through Joy. Well, I have always believed and hoped that some day human nature would revolt against the sobs of the sax. and the agonies of the strangled brass.

Not Cricket. These are signs of grace, but in other respects it seems to me that we are showing a nasty spirit. One Member of Parliament has been asking whether we can't employ a new secret weapon against our enemies—the earthquake, no less! He suggests that by discharging a 25,000-volt spark from a wireless set, we might engulf the entire embattled forces of our adversaries. I am all for shortening the war, but I cannot help asking, Is this cricket? But I must admit that there is not much cricket left in modern warfare. It is a shock, for instance, to read that a British naval officer has been firing torpedoes in the Mediterranean which "exploded with a roar just under the Monte Carlo Casino." It is one thing to break the bank and another thing to torpedo it. However, as several other of the same officer's torpedoes seem to have found more legitimate targets, we will forgive the Navy for what would otherwise be an unsportsmanlike action.

"I see they've revived this invasion business."

DRAWN BY WILLIAM SCULLY.

More Secret Weapons.

Anyhow, I hope the Navy will never so far forget itself as to use bottles of whisky as mines or anti-personnel bombs. This is what the Japanese have been doing, and it does not strike me as a very good example of Bushido, which is the Nippon equivalent of cricket. People are apt to be thirsty in the Pacific, and if they

[Continued overleaf.

"You know, I often think Churchill knows more than he cares to admit!"

DRAWN BY D'EGVILLE.

Continued.]

see a nice, unopened bottle of Fine Old Blended Scotch lying on the seashore in New Guinea, they feel that it is a pity to waste it. The result is a post-mortem. Moral—well, the moral was stated long ago by Sir Isaac Newton. He recommended picking up pebbles on the seashore of truth, but he said nothing about bottles of whisky. For the future, I hope that all professional and amateur beachcombers will follow the example of this great thinker. Bottles containing messages or literary compositions by shipwrecked mariners are well-known attractions of the seaside. All other bottles are to be avoided, because, if full, they are apt to be corrosive, and if empty, they usually consist of jagged edges, which are secret weapons against bathers and paddlers.

" Not at all, my good fellow . . . the fault was entirely mine ! "

DRAWN BY STARKE.

Bricks Without Pork.

All this only shows how true (if trite) it is that appearances are deceptive. You never know what anything will contain nowadays. Thus it has been stated in the House of Commons that a case of Pork Luncheon may consist entirely of bricks. This is going too far, because (to judge by my own experience) while you can make some things out of bricks, such as buns, rock-cakes and even puddings, you can't make Pork Luncheon out of bricks, though it *is* said that you can make it out of practically anything else. Similarly, you cannot really make salmon out of drain-pipes, though it is said that certain cases of fine, red salmon contain nothing but this crude form of crockery.

It is a cruel form of racket, whoever perpetrates it, for I can imagine nothing more depressing than to give a lot of points for a slab of Pork Luncheon and then to be confronted with a brick, which, besides being deficient in vitamins, is very difficult to carve.

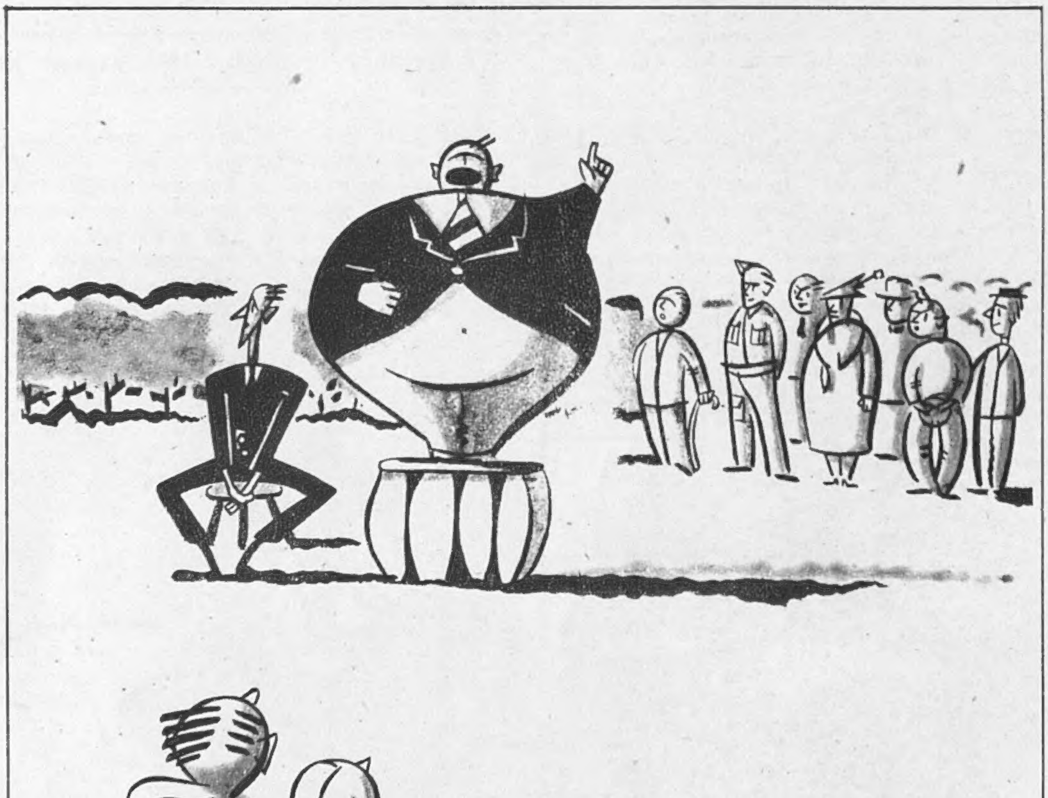
Wasn't there a prince in the Arabian Nights, one Barmecide, whose meals consisted solely of dish-covers? Well, Oriental potentates can often do with a little reducing diet, but these Barmecidal games in times of war are worth three years' penal servitude from any judge who has ever looked forward to his luncheon.

" I'm sorry, Sir, but our bullet-proof waistcoats are not guaranteed against moths ! "

DRAWN BY PITTS.

Milk for Babes.

By a strict application of the law, we ought to be able to keep bricks, drain-pipes and other foreign bodies out of our rationed diet, but it seems to be much more difficult to keep insidious Fifth Columnists, visible only to the microscope, out of our milk for babes. I know nothing about the scientific controversies which seem to surround this question, but I do know that for a great many years past the majority opinion of the medical profession has been agitating for law-enforced purification of milk, and that for some reason insuperable obstacles have always arisen. I also know that other countries, especially the United States, have found no such difficulties and that they regard our laxness in the matter as medieval. It is therefore a satisfaction to see that at last our babes, who are a very important element of the population, are getting a little Social Security in this respect.



" . . . and furthermore, ladies and gentlemen . . . the time has come when all men should be made equal ! "

DRAWN BY REX BENLOW.

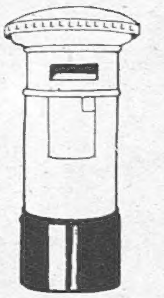
The sixty-eighth of our SERIES OF PLATES IN FULL COLOUR *published in this issue of " The Sketch " is by* DAVID WRIGHT.

"GEE! ONE MORE DAME AND I'LL GET A POIRMANENT CRICK IN THE NECK!"

DRAWN BY FRANK REYNOLDS.

Please forward

By JOYCE DENNYS.

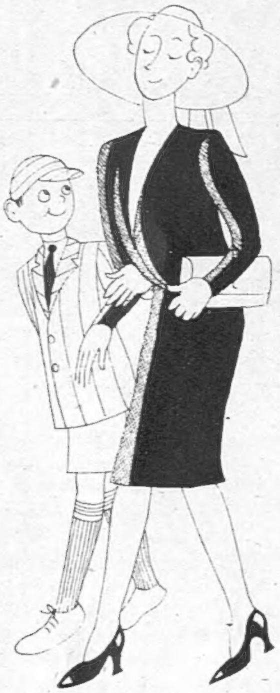


MY DEAR ROBERT—Lady B. has a grandson and Faith a nephew at a rather posh Prep. School which has evacuated itself into this district, so when it was announced that there would be Sports one Saturday half-way through the term, Lady B. and Faith naturally wanted to go. Charles, also, received a Royal Command from the Headmaster's wife that he would be expected to attend.

" I suppose as it 's Pleasure you won't be able to take your car, Charles," said Lady B. wistfully, for the school is many miles from the bus route.

" Pleasure ! " said Charles bitterly. " I have to look after these nauseating children all the term, and now I 'm expected to spend my Saturday afternoon watching them run races." From which you will gather, knowing Charles, that he is quite fond of the little boys committed to his care.

When the Sports Saturday arrived I dressed myself with unobtrusive neatness, as befits a Doctor's Wife, and we all squeezed into Charles's car and set off. Faith was lovely in cornflower-blue linen, and Lady B. looked everything a Grandmother should be. The Linnet, who was having a day off from Hospital, insisted upon coming too, saying that as she intends to have four sons it was time to start studying mother-at-sports technique. The only gloomy member of the party was Charles, who said it was the first free Saturday afternoon he 'd had this Summer, and he wanted to play bowls.



" In a large, womanly straw."

Personally, I love any sort of School Function, and when Bill and the Linnet were at school I never missed one if I could help it. For sheer excitement and throat-lumping emotion nothing ever touched the Fathers *v.* Daughters cricket match at the Linnet's school, but Bill's school put up some pretty good shows, too, and I sat through everything in what Charles called a welter of maternity.

" Lady B. made a brave start."

Dressing for School Functions is one of the most nerve-racking experiences a Mother has to face. Once, at Bill's school, I heard a boy say to his mother, " What a frightful hat you 've got on, Mother," and the poor woman turned, without a word, and got back into her car, and drove herself off to the nearest town and bought another. I saw her later in a large, womanly straw with pale-blue ribbons hanging down the back, and her son looking proud and happy and holding on to her arm. He was evidently that kind of boy. But how odd of her not to have discovered it before. The first thing that struck me at the Sports on Saturday was that the Mothers, though reputed to be grand and rich, looked much more comfortable than Mothers usually do on these occasions. Most of them were hatless and wore low-heeled shoes. The far-sighted ones carried shooting-sticks.

The most exhausting of all School Functions—and they are all pretty exhausting—is Sports where one stands about a good deal and mentally leaps (high and long), runs, hops and creeps through obstacles with the performing athletes. I remember once, when Bill was second in the high jump, I was so drained of vitality that a kindly house-master led me away to his study and made me drink whisky, so we were all pleased to see the Mothers looking so casual and happy, and spread the car rug on the grass, put on our dark glasses, and prepared to enjoy ourselves.

" Who 's that sweet little boy jumping ? " said Faith.

Charles screwed up his short-sighted eyes. " Barton (mi)," he said.

" Isn't he a lambkin ? " said the Linnet rapturously.

" As a matter of fact he 's a horrid little boy," said Charles with a certain amount of affection.

" Oh, well *jumped* ! " we shouted.

Barton (mi) won the High Jump, which quite set us up for the afternoon, and then Lady B.'s grandson Anthony, and Faith's nephew William, appeared to say that now it was Mothers' Race. They added, with evil smiles, that Grandmothers and Aunts were allowed to compete, and Lady B., without a moment's hesitation, got to her feet.

" Don't be a fool," said Charles. " Do you want to fall dead in the middle of the field ? "

" My dear Charles," said Lady B., " nothing shall prevent me from running this race with my grandson."

" Well, don't expect any attention from me," said Charles, leaning back and tilting his hat over his eyes.

" We 've got shoes for you," said Anthony and William, and produced them from their blazer pockets. I hoped Anthony's pair might be too small for Lady B., but she has a small, neat foot, and the next minute she was sitting on the rug putting them on.

" Is Granny really likely to fall dead ? " said Anthony to Charles, in an interested way. Charles opened his eyes and beckoned, and they had a short, whispered conversation. At the end of it I saw Anthony give Charles a knowing look and pocket half-a-crown.

" I shall look a perfect fright," said Faith, taking off her hat and handing it to the Conductor.

" No you won't, Aunt Faith," said William. " As a matter of fact, Davidson (ma) says you 're the prettiest woman here."

Faith was delighted with this compliment and went off, in high good humour, hand-in-hand with William. The Conductor followed along behind, holding her hat and begging her not to sprain her ankle.

The Mothers, who had to run hand-in-hand with their Sons, made quite an imposing array at the starting-post. Some of them had a grim look about the corners of their mouths, as though they had been in training for several months. I understood now why they had come in low-heeled shoes.

" Ready, steady, GO ! " said the Headmaster through his megaphone.

Lady B., one hand in Anthony's and the other holding up her skirt, made a brave start, but almost at once Anthony let go of her hand and fell to the ground, where he lay writhing and holding his ankle.

" Doctor Browne ! Doctor Browne ! " shouted somebody, and Charles, refusing, as usual, to be hurried, strolled on to the field. Luckily, Anthony's ankle was not badly hurt, and after a little time he was able to get up and hobble away.

Faith came in third and was congratulated by Davidson (ma).

Later on, in the Obstacle Race, somebody really did sprain his ankle, and what with that, and talking to one Mother about Tonsils, and another about Appendicitis, and another about Colds in the Head, Charles said he had earned his petrol.

Lady B. gave Anthony half-a-crown because he had made so little fuss about his ankle, and Anthony winked at Charles.

" Lady B. gave Anthony half-a-crown."

The Head Boy's Mother gave away the prizes, and at the end the Head Boy said, " Three cheers for Mother." It was a nice School Function.

Always your affectionate Childhood's Friend,

HENRIETTA.

CHINA'S FIRST LADY—
MADAME CHIANG KAI-SHEK.

MME. CHIANG KAI-SHEK, *wife of China's Generalissimo, has arrived back in Chungking from her long visit to America and Canada, where she put the case for more aid to China in lucid and eloquent English. Besides being an inspiration to her countrymen, China's First Lady is very chic in appearance and wears her clothes elegantly like a Parisienne.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY KARSH, OTTAWA.

CINEMA CAMEOS.

By C. A. LEJEUNE.

THE old spacious days of the Continental cinema are recalled this week in "TARAKANOVA," the French film at Studio One. This is a costume piece about the court of Catherine of Russia, and it has been presented with a camera eye for beauty that amounts almost to a passion. Beautiful sets, beautiful faces, beautiful compositions of figures are tenderly lit and photographed; individual moments are reluctantly relinquished, as though the camera could hardly bear to see the last of them.

After so many months spent exclusively with British and American films, we are apt to forget the subtle part played by *décor* in much of the Continental cinema. The *décor* in "Tarakanova" is a major protagonist. It is beautiful, but it is also vast. It is deliberately and formidably vast. Enormous palaces, magnificent galleons, colossal prisons, tremendous water-carnivals fill the screen. The doors seem higher, the gates more massive, the apartments ampler than normal. The sets are crushing in their huge beauty, and that is exactly what they are meant to be. For "Tarakanova" is the drama of one very small and helpless individual in a very large and terrible world. It is a tragedy of contrasts, in which the sets are an integral part of the design.

Tarakanova, the small person of the title, is the sixteen-year-old Elizabeth, daughter of a watchmaker, who is put up by the powerful Prince Radziwill as claimant to the throne of Russia. Groomed for royal stardom in the Radziwill Palace in Venice, idolised by her handful of followers, Elizabeth really believes that she is the grand-daughter of Peter the Great, and dedicates herself heart and soul to her mission. The threat to the throne is more tiresome than dangerous, but the Empress Catherine decides to deal with it in her own way. Unwilling to challenge open war with Venice, she sends her favourite, Count Orlov, with a warship to kidnap the pretender. Orlov is dashing and romantic. Elizabeth is flower-like and beautiful. They meet in Venice in carnival time and fall in love, and from that moment it is only a matter of time before Catherine sends them both to the scaffold.

Suzy Prim, that good actress with the neat, delightful name, plays Catherine of Russia as she has rarely been played: without glamour, without *gaminerie*, but with authority and wit, a great monarch with a man's mind and a woman's body. Pierre Richard Willm, the Count Orlov, you will remember from "Barcarolle" in pre-war days, but the delightful little actress who plays Elizabeth brings a new face to the screen. Her name is Annie Verney, and "Tarakanova" is her first film. Unhappily, it is also her last. I am told that she escaped from France after the German invasion, made her way to South America, contracted some sudden disease and died there. I should say that in Annie Verney the screen has lost a new Danielle Darrieux or Michele Morgan.

"FIVE GRAVES TO CAIRO" (Plaza) is a pretty good spy story, if you don't bother much about Von Stroheim being called Rommel, and the producers' suggestion that it was really Franchot Tone who led the Eighth Army to victory at El Alamein. Mr. Tone plays a British tank corporal who staggers, sand-blinded and half-dazed, into an Egyptian village, just ahead of Von Stroheim Rommel and his Headquarters Staff. A friendly innkeeper (Akim Tamiroff) passes the corporal off as the hotel waiter, a mysterious, club-footed man who has been killed in a recent air raid. It is a surprise to all, and particularly to Mr. Tone, when the dead waiter turns out to have been a German agent, deep in Von Stroheim Rommel's confidence. In this dilemma, which, I must say, Mr. Tone handles very prettily, he manages, without giving himself away, to find out the secret of the "Five Graves to Cairo"—five ammunition dumps in the desert, which Von Stroheim Rommel has prepared years ago against his invasion of Egypt.

Von Stroheim's portrait of Rommel is a lively and authoritative study of a bull-necked Prussian Field-Marshal who is the spitting image of Erich von Stroheim in make-up. Franchot Tone, after a run of bad luck or a series of bad tries, seems right back in form again, and Anne Baxter, the charming young girl from "Pied Piper" and "The Magnificent Ambersons," gives a touching performance as a French chambermaid who has been taught to believe that the British betrayed and deserted her country.

"Five Graves to Cairo," although scarcely history, is good, exciting fiction right up to the last five minutes. The last five minutes are terrible. Probably you would be well-advised to come away when you see that the campaign is going all right for Britain. If you must stay, if you will have your money's worth, you will assist at the edifying spectacle of the corporal laying a white lace parasol on the grave of the chambermaid. "Hullo, Moosh," he whispers—or possibly Mouche, a French name—"Perhaps I should kneel down so you can hear me better. I've brought you that parasol, Moosh" (or Mouche). "Perhaps it'll give you shade."

Addicts will find "HIT THE ICE" (Odeon), in which the boys are taken for gunmen from Detroit, one of the most satisfying Abbott and Costello comedies to date. It's crisp, fast and almost continuously funny—Abbott-and-Costello funny. There are even quite a lot of moments that are just plain, ordinary funny. Ginny Sims, the American radio favourite, sufficiently takes care of the singing. The numbers are good, and you don't need to be a swing-fan to understand why Miss Ginny has gone to the top of her class.

When I read Helen MacInnes' good spy story, "ABOVE SUSPICION," I certainly didn't "see" it as a vehicle for Fred MacMurray and Joan Crawford. Now that I have watched it on the screen at the Empire, I still don't "see" it as a medium for Fred MacMurray and Joan Crawford. The hero, you may remember, is an Oxford Professor, who is entrusted by the British Intelligence with a remarkably tricky bit of espionage during his Continental honeymoon. The point made in the book, of course, is that the Professor and his wife are ordinary and academic enough

THE BEST THEATRES.

*Starred by "The Sketch." ***=highest value.*

**Adelphi: "THE DANCING YEARS." Ivor Novello in his romantic musical play, with Muriel Barron and Roma Beaumont.

***Aldwych: "WATCH ON THE RHINE." Diana Wynyard, Anton Walbrook, Athene Seyler, Margaretta Scott. Anti-Nazis in the U.S.A.

**Ambassadors: "SWEET AND LOW." Hermione Gingold and Walter Crisham in revue.

***Apollo: "FLARE PATH." R.A.F. "ops." Adrianne Allen.

**Cambridge: "HEARTBREAK HOUSE." Revival—Robert Donat Edith Evans, Isabel Jeans, Deborah Kerr.

*Coliseum: "IT'S FOOLISH, BUT IT'S FUN." Revue with Nervo and Knox.

***Duchess: "BLITHE SPIRIT." Noel Coward's play. Kay Hammond, Cecil Parker, Irene Brown. (August 2 to 28—cast as follows: Joyce Carey, Judy Campbell.)

*Garrick: "LIVING ROOM." Esther McCracken's third. Louise Hampton and Jane Baxter.

*Globe: "THEY CAME TO A CITY." New Priestley play with John Clements, Googie Withers, Ada Reeve.

**Hippodrome: "THE LISBON STORY." Play with music.

**New: OPERA by the Sadler's Wells Company.

**Palace: "HI-DE-HI." Hilarious revue, with Flanagan and Allen, Florence Desmond, Eddie Gray.

**Palladium: "BEST BIB AND TUCKER." Tommy Trinder and Co.

*Phœnix: "LOVE FOR LOVE." Congreve comedy with John Gielgud, Yvonne Arnaud, Leslie Banks, Angela Baddeley, Leon Quartermaine.

**Prince of Wales: "STRIKE A NEW NOTE." George Black's revue, with the rising generation and Sid Field.

*Princes: "MAGIC CARPET." Musical extravaganza; with Sydney Howard and Cyril Fletcher.

**St. James's: "A MONTH IN THE COUNTRY." Turgenev comedy perfectly done; Michael Redgrave, Valerie Taylor, Ronald Squire.

**St. Martin's: "CLAUDIA." Joyce Redman and Hugh Sinclair on an American farm.

**Saville: "JUNIOR MISS." Comedy with the accent on youth. Joan White, Peggy Cummins.

***Savoy: "THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER." Brilliant boorishness by Robert Morley.

**Strand: "ARSENIC AND OLD LACE." Witty, murderous farce. Lilian Braithwaite, Mary Jerrold, Naunton Wayne, Frank Pettingell, Edmund Willard.

**Vaudeville: "LOTTIE DUNDASS." Unusual thriller with Ann Todd and Sybil Thorndike.

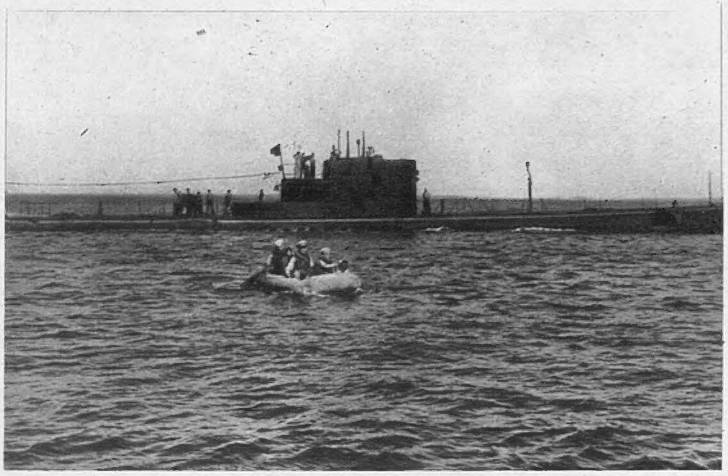
*Whitehall: "THE MOON IS DOWN." John Steinbeck's book dramatised. Lewis Casson, Karel Stepanek, Carla Lehmann.

*Wyndham's: "QUIET WEEK-END." Sequel to "Quiet Wedding."

N.B.—While we shall always do our best to keep this list up to date, we cannot hold ourselves responsible for any errors which may occur. Consult your daily paper; ring up the theatre to avoid disappointment.

to be above suspicion. Now Mr. MacMurray and Miss Crawford, I am sure you will agree, are not at all ordinary, and as academic types they seem to me to clamour for suspicion. Any self-respecting German spy, for example, would *know* Miss Crawford was no professor's wife when she complains of being "bored" at having to wear the same hat four days running.

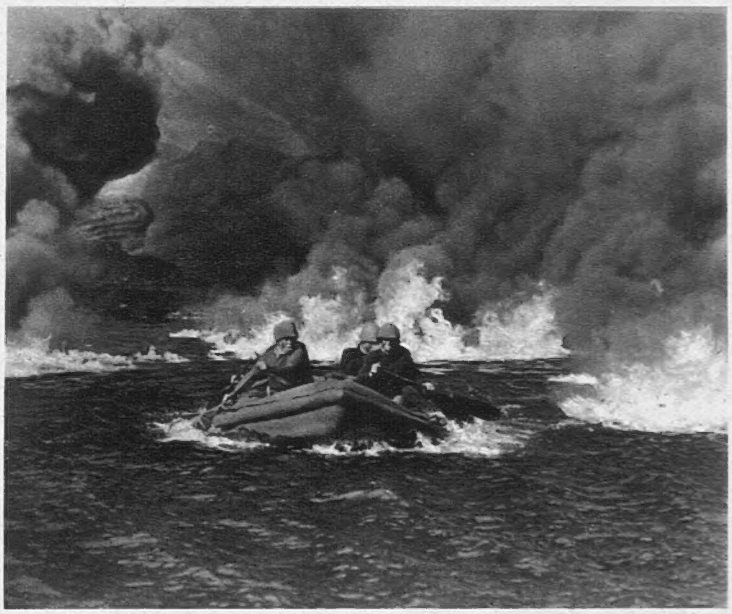
Fortunately for Britain, the German agents, under Basil Rathbone, are not too bright a lot anyway, and Mr. MacMurray and Miss Crawford manage to get the complete details of the magnetic mine without any very severe test of their scholarship. The pursuit of clues, from Paris through South Germany to the Italian frontier, is exciting enough, and the players have a flip talent which stops the story from settling down into a mere rigmarole.



"Crash Dive," in Technicolor (New Gallery and Tivoli), is Tyrone Power's last film for the duration, for he has joined the U.S. Navy. As Lieut. Ward Stewart, TYRONE POWER *is sent from his submarine to investigate the nationality of a suspicious-looking ship.*

Miss MacInnes' book, you may remember, went to a good deal of trouble to build up the Oxford background in the opening chapter. The film hasn't time to stop and bother much about backgrounds, but is generous in giving Oxford credit. Entering the lair of the Master Spy, Miss Crawford observes: "You know, Richard, there is an air of culture about this room. Could it be Oxford?" And at a tense moment, when All is likely to be Revealed, she hastily brushes a few light chords on the piano. "You remember this?" she says. "You went to Oxford?" And they all burst into the Eton Boating Song.

Stewart is summoned to Washington and en route he accidentally gets into the berth of an attractive young schoolmistress, Jean Hewlitt (ANNE BAXTER). *They fall for each other, and he invites her to an Embassy ball.*



Later, Stewart leaves the submarine again to blast a Nazi supply base on a small island. An oil tank goes up in flames, and he and his men make a dangerous return through a sea covered with burning oil.

The friendship between Stewart and his chief, Lieut.-Commander Dewey Connors (DANA ANDREWS), *becomes a little strained when Stewart discovers that his girl-friend is Connors' fiancée.*

The Soviet film "THE NEW GULLIVER," at the Tatler, is a nice change from the usual run of propaganda pictures, because all the leading actors but one are puppets, and their performances are brilliant. The propaganda is there all right, sounding rather naïve to present-day ears, but there is more than usual to go with it, in the way of imagination, ingenuity and downright clever craftsmanship. The story concerns a Soviet Boy Scout, who falls asleep over his favourite book, "Gulliver's Travels," during a day's hiking by the Black Sea. In his dreams he finds himself a prisoner in the land of dolls—a horrid, capitalist, king-ruled Lilliput. With the advantage not only of his vast size, but his advanced sociology, he studies the customs and the government of this ridiculous, ant-sized monarchy. He observes the sottish, strutting king, the evil ministers of state, the down-trodden workers blindly manufacturing armaments underground for their own destruction. He sees how these dwarfs have their own dwarfs—perhaps the only echo of Dean Swift in the whole film, with its suggestion of "Little fleas have other fleas Upon their backs to bite them. And other fleas have lesser fleas, And so *ad infinitum.*"

In time, of course, the boy, being a Communist *and* a Scout, puts things to rights. He does his good deed for the day. He teaches the miners to read from his school books, "Long live the Union of the Workers of the World," and "Blow a blast for liberty and freedom," and eventually wakes up in a world of life-sized Communism, with the happy knowledge that his Lilliputian comrades can't go wrong.

As a piece of sheer mechanics "The New Gulliver" is enchanting, and a technician's delight. The dolls, some thousands in number, some of them with as many as 300 interchangeable heads, are cynically contrived and brilliantly manipulated. A. Ptushko, the director, is a Russian cartoonist who has made a speciality of creating satirical puppets for the films. "The New Gulliver" took him three years to make, as many as twenty-five shots being needed for a single gesture, such as the raising of a Lilliputian arm.

As a work of art, or even a persuasive bit of propaganda, it is all a little bit perplexing. One cannot help feeling that the Soviet satirists might have made their points better without calling in the help of the gusty Dean, who, so far as I know, never converted anyone to Communism.

ROYAL OCCASIONS, NOTABLE PEOPLE,

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY *was celebrated in Moscow. A concert of contemporary U.S.A. music was given in the big hall of the Moscow Conservatoire by the Soviet State Orchestra conducted by Honoured Artist of the U.S.S.R. Nathan Rachlin.*

The KING *and* QUEEN *spent nearly an hour examining the big-scale maps and diagrams showing the "new London" designed in the County of London Plan. They were guided by the authors of the plan, Mr. J. H. Forshaw and Professor Patrick Abercrombie.*

Right: LADY YULE'S *film company, British National, have averaged eight pictures yearly since the war. These include "One of Our Aircraft is Missing."*

SIR GRAHAM CUNNINGHAM, *Knighted in the Birthday Honours, leaves the Palace with* LADY CUNNINGHAM. *He is Director-General of Munitions at the Ministry of Supply and Chairman of the Triplex Safety Glass Co., Ltd.*

F/O. C. C. STORRY, D.F.C., R.A.A.F., *only son of Mr. Claud Storry, of Brisbane, married* ASST. S/O. J. P. GRAEME RUTTER, W.A.A.F., *only daughter of Major Owen Rutter, at St. Peter's, Cranley Gardens.*

LORD TWEEDSMUIR, *son of the first holder of the title—the distinguished author, the late John Buchan—is seen briefing Tactical Air Force pilots.*

"FOUGASSE" *and* MR. CECIL BEATON *(right) selected the exhibits submitted by Civil Defence Artists for their thirteenth exhibition—Theatre Designs, Posters and Photography—which Mr. John Gielgud arranged to open on July 27 at the Cooling Galleries.*

BRIDES AND GROOMS OF THE WEEK.

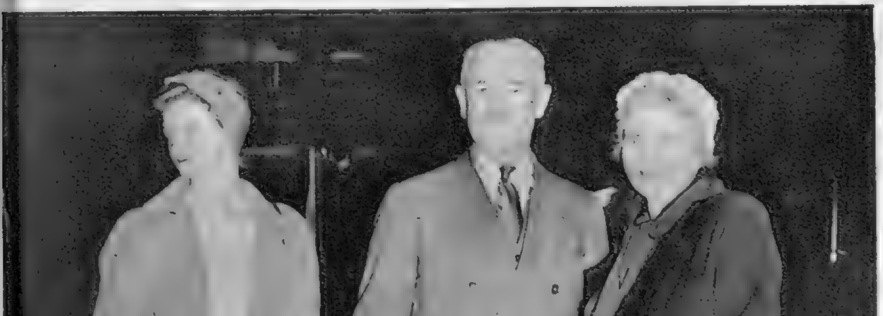
LIEUT. JOHN FRANCIS DRAKE, R.N., *believed to be a descendant of his great Elizabethan namesake, was married at St. Luke's, Hampstead, to* MISS GIANETTA PHYLLIS LLOYD, W.R.N.S., *daughter of Paymaster Capt. Lloyd, R.N.*

MRS. WINSTON CHURCHILL *and* PROF. SARKISOV, *Soviet Red Cross Representative, inspected medical equipment at a Red Cross Store before dispatch to Russia. The Aid to Russia Fund now has a new list of urgently needed supplies.*

LT. P. MURRAY JONES, R.N., *son of Surgeon Capt. Murray Jones, R.N. (ret.), married* MISS ELIZABETH ANN GRAYBURN, W.R.N.S., *daughter of Sir Vandeleur Grayburn, at the King's Chapel of the Savoy.*

MRS. BROMET *is the wife of Capt. R. Bromet, Combined Operations Bombardment Officer responsible for the accuracy of the bombardment of Augusta.*

Left: After the capture of Augusta, the gunnery commander on the firing map of a British cruiser said it should be renamed Brometsville, in honour of the accurate instructions given by CAPTAIN R. BROMET.



THE VICEROY-DESIGNATE OF INDIA *met* LADY WAVELL *and their daughter,* MISS FELICITY WAVELL, *when they arrived from India last week. On July 1 it was announced that the King had conferred a Viscounty on Field-Marshal Sir Archibald Wavell.*

KING HAAKON OF NORWAY *decorated* CAPT. SUNDE *after his fifty-first "Battle of the Atlantic" crossing, and* MRS. FERN SUNDE, *Chief Wireless Operator for twenty months in a Norwegian merchantman.*

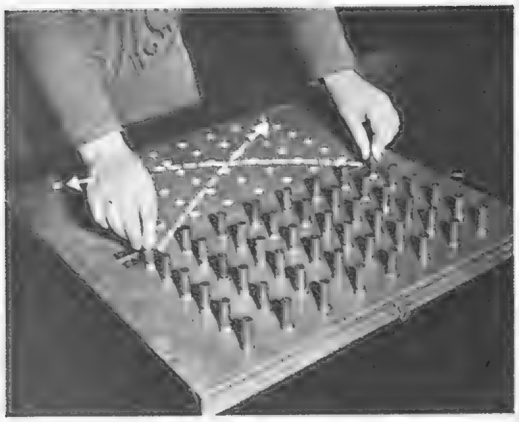
MONTGOMERY'S "LET'S FACE IT" THEATRE FACE.

During his visit to London in May, undertaken in order to discuss matters of high importance, GENERAL MONTGOMERY *found time to go more than once to the theatre. He saw "Arsenic and Old Lace" at the Strand and also went to the London Hippodrome, where Bobby Howes was then appearing in "Let's Face It." From our series of photographs of the General, taken when he was watching the last-named show, it will be seen that he enjoyed every minute of it. He was instantly recognised by the audience and received a tremendous ovation, both at the Strand and at the Hippodrome. In fact, his visit to England, although "secret," was known to most Londoners, as his famous features could hardly fail to be "spotted." On the facing page we give snapshots of the General and his son.*

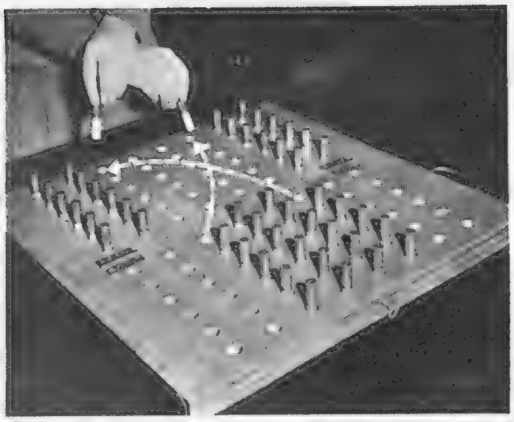
GENERAL BERNARD MONTGOMERY, of the famous Eighth Army, victor of North Africa and Commander of the British Forces in Sicily, paid a secret visit to England in May and was in this country for a fortnight. One of his most important engagements was a visit to his only son, DAVID BERNARD MONTGOMERY, who is at Amesbury School. Our photographs show the General explaining the much-vaunted German Tiger Mark VI. "terror" tank to his son by means of the remarkable photographs published in "The Illustrated London News" dated May 22. This tank, which the Germans believed to be invincible, was no terror to the Allied armies. Our accurate shooting destroyed many of these huge engines of war which were specially designed as defensive weapons for desert warfare.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEYSTONE.

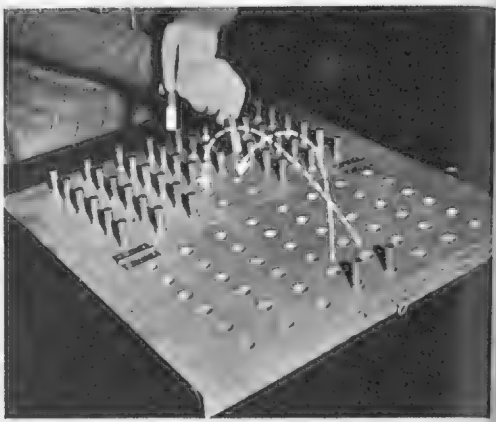
GENERAL MONTGOMERY EXPLAINS THE TIGER TANK TO HIS SON.



CRISS-CROSS TEST ON A PEG-BOARD *will uncover abilities. The pegs must be moved from one side of the board to the other.*



In the criss-cross test two hands are used to move the pegs, which must be transferred to corresponding holes.

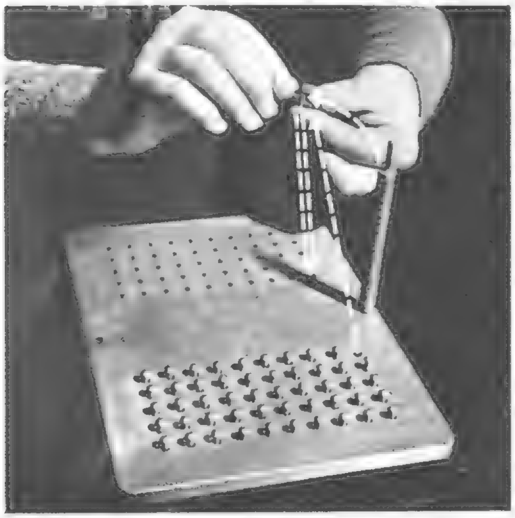


This photograph shows the operation nearly completed. An average good time for moving the pegs is 25 seconds.

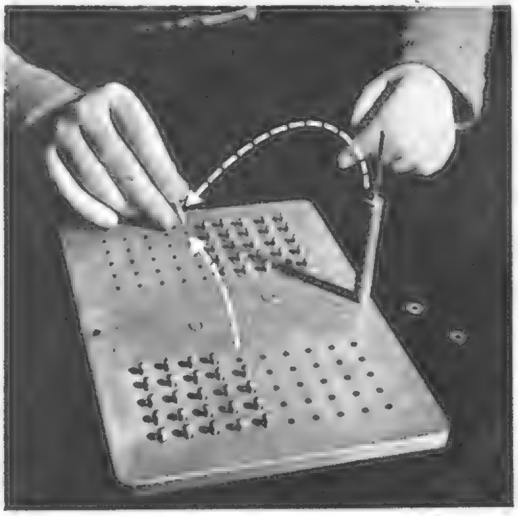
TURNING DISCS OVER. *A simple operation, but a good performance in this and supplementary tests shows packing ability.*

To start with, the discs are all turned light side up. Each hand must turn its disc over without help from the other.

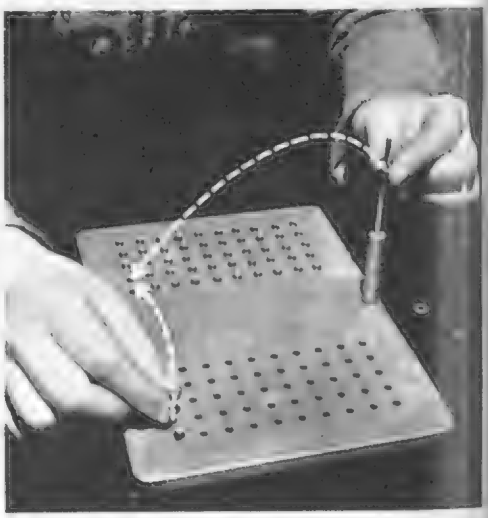
The arrows show the motion of disc turning. A promising worker would complete the operation i[n] some thirty seconds.



ASSEMBLING TESTS *are slightly more complicated than disc and peg ones. This one features rivets and washers.*



The rivets are in holes on one side of the board. They must be picked up, fitted with washers and replaced on the other side.



By the time that the test is completed a few washers may be lying by the board. This does not mean bad marks.

PEG-BOARD TESTS TO KEEP SQUARE PEGS OUT OF ROUND HOLES!

AMERICAN women applicants for war jobs are tried out by special intelligence tests which enable their general aptitude or special talents to be assessed, and help employers to avoid the danger of putting them in work to which they are temperamentally or physically unsuited. These tests seem pretty simple, but they are arranged in combinations called "batteries," which uncover the special gifts of untried workers. A girl applying for work in an aircraft machine-shop would be given the tweezer dexterity test and more elaborate paper tests which are not illustrated on these pages. The result would show if she were likely to do a good job or not. Test batteries for special jobs are set up by first "analysing the job." The U.S. Employment Service officials go out to a factory and give aptitude tests to efficient workers. Practically always the good workers all make good scores in certain tests. These tests are then used on applicants for the jobs and good scores in them are taken to indicate promising material.

N.B. *A Coloured plate is inserted in this issue.*

A PEG-BOARD TEST FOR MANUAL DEXTERITY: *The girl must pick the pegs up and arrange them on the other side of the board in the same pattern.*

TWEEZER DEXTERITY TEST: *This helps to rate the ability of a girl to work with small tools, as she has to pick pegs out of holes with small tweezers and rearrange them.*

The BLOCK TEST *is a fairly simple try-out for quickness of hand. The girl has to put wooden discs in the board in the pattern in which they are laid out. Results are on speed only.*

GROUP CAPTAIN A. G. ("SAILOR") MALAN, *D.S.O. and Bar, D.F.C. and Bar, Croix de Guerre, with* MRS. MALAN *and their three-year-old son,* JONATHAN.

BABY VALERIE, *safe in the strong arms of her father,* "SAILOR" MALAN, *is an object of great interest to brother* JONATHAN.

"SAILOR" MALAN AT HIS OWN HOME BASE.

GROUP CAPTAIN ADOLPH GYSBERT ("SAILOR") MALAN, South African-born Ace R.A.F. pilot, won the D.F.C. at Dunkirk, and a Bar to it for night operations in 1940, and was awarded the D.S.O. for fighter operations over England and the Channel in the same year, and a Bar to it in 1941 for "ops." over France. He also has the Croix de Guerre (avec Palme). Not long ago he entertained a thousand guests in celebration of the shooting down of a thousand enemy 'planes by the pilots of the Biggin Hill Sector. Group Captain Malan married, in 1938, Miss Lynda Irene Fraser, and has a son of three, and a baby daughter. Early this year he was Fighter Command's top scorer with thirty-two German 'planes to his credit, and had just been given command of the Fighter Station in S.E. England from which he flew originally as Flight Lieut., Squadron Leader, and Wing Commander.

GROUP CAPTAIN *and* MRS. MALAN *with their three-year-old son,* JONATHAN, *and the tiny baby,* VALERIE.

FLYING ACE MALAN *has got an armful here in the shape of his son* JONATHAN *and a couple of obstreperous kittens.*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEYSTONE.

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO—

MR. AUGUSTUS JOHN, O.M.—*for his ready acceptance of a lemon from Señorita Ana Carcano.*

CANVASSED at the Chilean Ambassador's fête by Señorita Ana Carcano, daughter of the Argentine Ambassador, MR. AUGUSTUS JOHN, the painter, gaily bought a raffle ticket from her, the prize a lemon. The proceeds from side-shows and entertainments at Señor Don Bianchi's party all went to swell the coffers of the Royal Naval War Libraries.

COMMANDER E. A. GIBBS—*for being the first man in this war to win four D.S.O.s and "never telling his wife."*

COMMANDER E. A. GIBBS, R.N., of the destroyer "Pathfinder," has a splendid record. He is the first man to receive four D.S.O.s in this war: he won the D.S.O. in 1939 for successful actions against U-boats; the first Bar in 1941, for skill, enterprise and devotion in H.M.S. "Fortune"; the second Bar in 1942 after helping to sink a U-boat during a Malta convoy battle; his third Bar last month for his part in the five-days' convoy battle which closed the mid-Atlantic "gap." When he wins a decoration, his wife says he never tells her, but lets her wait for the official announcement!

CAPTAIN the REV. R. T. WATKINS, peacetime Methodist minister, now an Army padre, took a parachute jump into Sicily with the gallant British paratroops, who against heavy odds captured and held the bridge at Primosolo, south-west of Catania. Captain Watkins volunteered for a parachute battalion on condition that he would be allowed to jump with the men. W.O. permission was granted after several weeks. In Tunisia, after a parachute jump, when he landed 30 yards from the German lines, he helped to get the wounded away while the enemy was driven back.

Left: CAPTAIN *the* REV. ROBERT T. WATKINS—*for joining a parachute battalion on condition that he should be allowed to jump with the men.*

CAPTAIN COLIN MORRIS—*for shouting, as he kicked open a Sicilian door: "Advanco mucho pronto, suos bastardos!" and capturing, single-handed, 130 Italians.*

CAPTAIN COLIN MORRIS, official observer on the Sicilian front, who does not speak Italian, has developed a sort of Esperanto of his own which, with violent gestures, has definite punch. Snooping around one day for news, he met a Sicilian girl who told him that Italian soldiers were concealed near by. "Tell them," he said, "to come out—the Potentes Alliados are here." They refused, so kicking the door open, expecting two or three enemy at the most, Morris yelled "Advanco mucho pronto, suos bastardos!" After a pause, they filed out one by one, till 130 men, fully armed, stood before him against the ruins of the Greek amphitheatre in Syracuse. Another yell brought all their arms, guns and ammunition crashing to the ground. Morris then mounted his motor-cycle, and marshalled them down the road to the prisoners-of-war cage, which took hours, he said, adding that they behaved very well.

COMMANDER PAULINE GOWER, A.T.A., ferry pilot and a director of British Overseas Airways Corporation, made a witty speech when she received the Freedom of the Pattenmakers' Company from the Master, Lieut.-General Sir John Brown. Remarking that when women first began to ferry 'planes for the R.A.F., they were only allowed to fly the older types, she said it was because the authorities thought that "the hand that rocks the cradle wrecks the crate!"

COMMANDER PAULINE GOWER *(shown receiving the Freedom of the Pattenmakers' Company from Lieut.-General Sir J. Brown)—for saying: "The hand that rocks the cradle wrecks the crate!"*

MRS. BUTLER, A.T.A., happened to be delivering a Mosquito to an R.A.F. squadron when Mr. R. G. Casey was visiting the aerodrome, and there she found her husband, Mr. A. S. Butler, Chairman of the de Havilland Company, who introduced his ferry-pilot wife to the Minister of State.

MRS. BUTLER, A.T.A. *(seen with her husband)—for ferrying a 'plane to an R.A.F. 'drome just in time for an introduction to Mr. R. G. Casey.*

HERMIONE GINGOLD *gave a new comedy number to entertain guests at her house-warming and " Sweet and Low " success celebration tea-party. Her audience consisted of (l. to r.)* BRIAN DESMOND HURST, ALASTAIR THOMPSON, ILENA SYLVA, BRIAN MICHIE, CLARENCE ASHTON, CHARLES HICKMAN, BRENDA BRUCE, RICHARD CURNOCK, CHRIS HEWITT *and* JEAN JEFFERSON FARJEON.

Hostess at the window! HERMIONE GINGOLD *looks down Kinnerton Street to see if the guests are arriving.*

Cultivating beauty: HERMIONE GINGOLD *waters a pot of marguerites which decorates the pavement outside her new house.*

"SWEET AND LOW" SUCCESS CELEBRATION.

HERMIONE GINGOLD, star of " Sweet and Low " at the Ambassadors, has just moved into an attractive house in Kinnerton Street, Knightsbridge, so the celebration party she recently gave in honour of the success of the new show was also a house-warming. Miss Gingold writes a good deal of the material that she puts over so brilliantly, and is responsible for the amusing burlesque " Arsenic and Old Plays," in which she takes off Lilian Braithwaite, and for the monologue " Dress Talk " in " Sweet and Low." She has also written several short stories, and has just completed a serious play, which is under consideration for early production. Her hobbies are collecting old china and first editions; and playing the piano.

MISS GINGOLD *at her front door, with* CHARLES HICKMAN *(left), producer of " Sweet and Low," and* WALTER CRISHAM, *her opposite number.*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PICTORIAL PRESS.

ANN TODD PLAYS THE MURDERESS.

ANN TODD, *the Peter Pan of last year, is now the passionate murderess of "Lottie Dundass," at the Vaudeville. Here is the play's most critical moment, when, driven insane by ambition and confident of her own genius, Lottie has committed the crime to realise her life's desire to be a "star."*

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN VICKERS.

BARBARA STANWYCK AS THE "STRIPTEUSE" HEROINE OF A BACK-STAGE MURDER THRILLER.

BARBARA STANWYCK *plays Dixie Daisy in* "STRIPTEASE LADY," *the United Artists release picture version of Gypsy Rose Lee's best-seller novel* "*G-String Murders,*" *which is due for presentation at the Odeon, Leicester Square, on July 30. Gypsy Rose Lee is herself a famous American* "*stripteuse,*" *and her thriller, with a back-stage setting, is full of lively theatrical* "*slanguage*" *and wise-cracking.*

The story is concerned with a series of mysterious murders in the Old Opera Theatre, and the sequences include quarrels between leading ladies, police raids and investigations. There is a most startling solution of the problem of the murdered girls, not revealed till the very end of the picture. The cast also includes Michael O'Shea, J. Edward Bromberg and Victoria Faust.

VARGA'S LIVING CALENDAR, *with every month portrayed by a lovely girl, is a feature of the M.-G.-M. Technicolor musical version of the stage show* "DU BARRY WAS A LADY," *due at the Empire, Leicester Square, on July 30. The girls are (l. to r.) Aileen Haley, Kay Aldridge (seated), Hazel Brooks, Georgia Carroll, Eve Whitney (seated), Inez Cooper, Ruth Ownbey, Kay Williams (reclining), Dorothy Haas, Natalie Draper, Theo Coffman and Mary Jane French.*

LUCILLE BALL *plays May Daly, the gold-digging night-club singer heroine of "Du Barry Was a Lady." Louis Blore* (RED SKELTON), *the club cloakroom attendant, is madly in love with her. He dreams that he has been transformed into Louis XV. and that she has become Madame Du Barry. This still comes from the mock-period sequences of the film version of the stage play, which has music and lyrics by Cole Porter.*

"DU BARRY WAS A LADY"—AND VARGA'S MONTHS ARE GIRLS!

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

By L. P. HARTLEY.

DESCRIBED by Mr. Priestley as "a novel about an aircraft factory," "Daylight on Saturday" is a story with a strong topical interest. Many people who do not know how a factory works would like to; and many who do know will be interested to see the impression it makes on a writer of Mr. Priestley's understanding and discernment.

Both groups, the ignorant and the initiated, must agree that his grasp of detail is amazing. He says at the outset that for security reasons he has neglected the technical aspects of factory production, but that does not mean that he is unaware of the presence of machinery. All through, indeed, the machines seem uncomfortably close; and his description of the sinister contraption which makes its début at the end of the story has a fearful kind of poetry which affects the imagination more deeply than would any number of technical terms. As for his handling of the personnel of the factory, it is masterly. From Mr. Cheviot, the general manager, and his two chief assistants, Mr. Blandford and Mr. Elrick, down to the boy Randolph Parkins, they live, with equal vividness, their own individual lives and the corporate life of the factory. The things that bring them together—factory politics and intrigues, meals, the wireless, organised entertainments, their common purpose in the war effort—are given as much prominence, or nearly as much, as the personal problems that keep them to themselves. And though Mr. Priestley never seems to be trying to make them so, they belong essentially to to-day: they speak its language, they breathe its air and their problems are its problems.

Pressing Problems. One of these is the problem of the future. Several of Mr. Priestley's characters are politically-minded: there are Communists, Socialists, reactionaries, all exceedingly articulate, all with their ideas of what the world should be like after the war. Another allied problem, and one which has always interested Mr. Priestley, is the relation of the individual to the mass. It is a pressing problem in the factory, for in this particular week of October 1942 there is a lull in the war, and this has meant a falling-off in production. Mr. Cheviot, the manager, diagnoses the cause as boredom. "Some say the English are lazy. They're not, though. They soon get bored—that's all." Ogmore, the Communist, says: "The workers haven't got a clear picture in their minds. They aren't sure what the real issue is. It isn't their country." Mr. Priestley's characters speak with many voices. Which of them speaks with his? It is difficult to tell; and often he puts enlightened opinions into the mouths of characters who, like Elrick, are making a mess of their lives and doing no good in the factory. The benefit of his wisdom he gives to Mr. Cheviot, who throughout the story acts as a symbol of union, who takes no short cuts, indulges in no convenient simplifications, and manages at the cost of much weariness and anxiety to sympathise with each person's point of view while keeping his eye steadily fixed on the goal of increased production.

A Curtain Call. The Many and the Few—what chance is there of promoting, or discovering, among human beings a state of mind which will combine the advantages of the corporate and the individual spirit? Mr. Priestley appears to be in search of such a panacea, but I do not think he finds one, and his title seems to me more sanguine and hopeful than is justified by the trend of his story—in which there is plenty of faith but not much promise, and the shadows are more prominent than the light. But it is difficult to make a generalisation about a book as complex and multi-minded as this. Mr. Priestley's sympathies have a very wide range. They are controlled by his æsthetic sense, his sense of fairness and his respect for probability, yet in spite of these checks they are real and human, not abstract and automatic. The characterisation is extremely skilful and remarkable for a rare quality which might be called perspective. They are shown to us in varying degrees of distinctness, irrespective of their importance to the story. Thus Gwen Ockley is always as plain as a pikestaff, while Joyce Deerhurst is enveloped in mystery—one never quite fathoms her. At the end of the book Mr. Priestley has a curtain call in which thirty-nine names are mentioned, and even from this muster there are several absentees. What a feat to have kept us interested in them all! And yet, had there been nine instead of thirty-nine, I think the book might have given a still more impressive exhibition of the author's powers—only then it would have been a different book.

Last week H.E. the Chinese Ambassador, DR. WELLINGTON KOO *(seen with his wife), opened the Confucian Exhibition at the Courtauld Institute, 20, Portman Square. No exhibition since the outbreak of war has given us such insight into the spirit of China as this one, which was arranged by Professor W. P. Yetts, Professor of Chinese Art and Archæology at London University (left), who prepared it from material collected by him during a visit to Ch'u-fu, the home of Confucius. Proceeds will be devoted to the United Aid to China Fund.*

Agatha Christie. Whether Mrs. Agatha Christie is the best detective-story writer we have is a moot point: but she is certainly the most versatile and among the most original. Fantasy and realism come equally easily to her; she has in stock a great number of veils, of varying degrees of opaqueness; she is always inventing new ways of leading her readers astray. In "The Moving Finger" she devises a new kind of smoke-screen, and very effective it is. The villagers of Lymstock, where the poison-pen got to work among them, would shake their heads and say "There's no smoke without fire," and in a way they were right, though not quite in the way they meant. The injured airman and his sister who had taken a house in Lymstock to enjoy a spell of rural peace were as keenly interested in their neighbours as their neighbours were in them. The process of getting to know everyone is so absorbing that we are inclined to forget that besides the anonymous letters there are a suicide and a murder to be accounted for. This, no doubt, is part of Mrs. Christie's policy of "misdirection." Miss Marple, the amateur sleuth who makes a brief, but effective, intervention in the case, observes that a successful murder must be like a conjuring trick. "You've got to make people look at the wrong thing and in the wrong place—Misdirection, they call it, I believe." Mrs. Christie's detective stories are all like conjuring tricks; she is the greatest living expert in the art of misdirection. There are quite a number of ladies in Lymstock, including the Rector's wife, and one ladylike old gentleman, queer enough or frustrated enough to have written the letters; Megan, with her perverse affection for Goneril and Regan, is a natural suspect; but, as I said, we are too busy enjoying their company and their pointful conversation to be as alert as we might be. . . . No doubt this heedlessness is deliberately induced by Mrs. Christie; but at the same time it might be held to be a defect in the story that the revelation should come as a surprise indeed, but not as a shock, and not with a sense of climax. We had found it so interesting to look in the wrong direction that we slightly resent being re-orientated, even in the service of justice.

As regards dialogue and characterisation, "The Moving Finger" takes a high place among Mrs. Christie's stories. The detective element, cleverly managed as it is, is a little disappointing. But then, in a conjuring trick, it is the illusion of magic that fascinates us, rather than the means by which the illusion is produced.

Naval Occasions. The stories and sketches in "A Matter of Duty" are all, or practically all, concerned with some aspect of contemporary naval warfare. Mr. Cranston, who is on active service with the Royal Navy, knows what he is writing about. He also knows how to write. These naval occasions are very deftly described. Pictorially and psychologically, they are snapshots rather than close-ups. Mr. Cranston does not attempt elaborate portraits. He deals with simple types, sometimes with men who have been misfits in civil life but who find that the Navy brings out the best in them. They are, as a rule, good-tempered, good-natured and affectionate: and they share the fellowship of heroism. For this reason, and because the actions in which they take part usually terminate (one is happy to think) successfully, there is a certain sameness about Mr. Cranston's work—fertile as he is in devising fresh circumstances, personal and marine, to differentiate and adorn his tales. When, as in "The Feud," he tries his hand at a "plot," he does it well and one would like to see more pieces of this kind from his pen. The others, vivid as they are, tend to dovetail easily into one another.

King Penguins. The "King Penguin Books" are a new venture which deserves a warm welcome. First cousins to the "Britain in Pictures" series, they are smaller in size and less ambitious in scope. This limitation has its advantages, for it enables the authors to treat their subjects without undue compression. The volumes that have come to me are "Fashions and Fashion Plates, 1800-1900," by Mr. James Laver; "Elizabethan Miniatures," by Mr. Carl Winter; "British Shells" (of the seashore, not the munitions factory), by Mr. F. Martin Duncan; and "The Microcosm of London," an abridgment, by Mr. John Summerson, of the original "Microcosm" of Rowlandson and Pugin. Almost as charming to look at as to look into, these booklets are decorative both outside and in; the coloured plates are well reproduced and the text, in each case, is by an authority who unbends slightly, but not too much, to accommodate himself to the slender information of the lay reader. Perhaps Mr. Laver's survey of nineteenth-century fashion will be the most generally popular, but readers with escapist leanings will linger over the shells and the creatures, also escapists, who inhabit them.

BOOKS REVIEWED.

Daylight on Saturday. By J. B. Priestley. (*Heinemann; 9s. 6d.*)
The Moving Finger. By Agatha Christie. (*Collins; 7s. 6d.*)
A Matter of Duty. By Edward Cranston. (*Longmans; 6s.*)
Fashions and Fashion Plates, 1800-1900. By James Laver. **Elizabethan Miniatures.** By Carl Winter. **British Shells.** By F. Martin Duncan. **The Microcosm of London.** By John Summerson. (*King Penguin Books; 2s. each.*)

REGENCY FILM—"THE MAN IN GREY."

Clarissa, Marchioness of Rohan (PHYLLIS CALVERT; *right*), *finding her old schoolfellow Hester* (MARGARET LOCKWOOD) *touring in a third-rate repertory company, takes her back to London to stay with her.*

Lady Rohan makes friends with her husband's new librarian, Peter Rokeby (STEWART GRANGER), *to whom she once gave a lift in her coach, when he was a poor strolling actor.*

Clarissa's husband, the Marquis (JAMES MASON), *though aghast at the beautiful Hester's past, falls violently in love with her.*

BASED on Lady Eleanor Smith's novel of the same name, "The Man in Grey" (due August 1 at Gaumont, Haymarket, and Marble Arch Pavilion) is a film of Regency days. Clarissa Richmond, London's star débutante, makes a marriage of convenience with the Marquis of Rohan, who wants a son. Her school-friend, Hester, side-tracks his affections after the marriage, and Clarissa finds romance with her husband's librarian, Peter. Tragedy results, and the film moves into the present day, where descendants repeat the love-affair of Peter and Clarissa without its dire consequences.

Lord Mildmay (GLYN ROLAND), *Mrs. Fitzherbert* (NORA SWINBURNE), *the Prince Regent* (RAYMOND LOVELL) *and Lord Craven* (HARGRAVE PAWSON) *(l. to r.) go racing at Epsom, and watch the Derby.*

Lord Rohan is far from being a faithful husband, but he jealously follows Peter and his wife Clarissa to Vauxhall Gardens, where he knows they have a date.

DAY ON DAY OFF.*

By JOHN BALDOCK.

"IT really is amazing that we never quarrel." Freddy said that, and thought: "Perhaps it's rather a dangerous thing to say, but we always do say it on these occasions."

"Wonder if it's ever been done before?"

"What matters is, how long can we make it work?"

"Um, that remains to be seen. I know it's unconventional, but it's damn silly to quarrel over a woman. After all, friendships are rare, but we are in no doubt as to the transitoriness of women."

The car sped almost silently over the new smooth road, but they both had the steady roar of giant engines in the empty places of their heads, and conversation languished. Both were pondering Freddy's last remark with drowsy detachment. They were driving to Alex., one to meet the girl and the other to spend an afternoon out of the camp. Freddy was perhaps feeling rather less detached than Hugh, because it was his day on, and when one was meeting her one did feel slightly superior. And, anyhow, he always felt a little superior over Peggy, because he had found her and got a good start before Hugh came back from sick leave. He had known her for six weeks, or six days, or so many hours before he had introduced her to Hugh. He had made great strides in that time, but, of course, Hugh had come up pretty fast once he started. And then Freddy went on leave and Hugh came up neck-and-neck, and after that they saw her alternate weeks. But it was distinctly tiresome only taking her out every other time, especially when you had found her first.

Freddy and Hugh settled into an effortless conversation, the sort of conversation they loved because it was unfettered by camp atmosphere. Although most of the officers were really civilians they had very quickly acquired all the conventions of mess life. A certain heartiness, great insularity in a foreign land cluttered up by people of incomprehensible and frequently insanitary habits, rigidly unemotional, very short-haired. Of course, you could say what you felt as impetuously as you liked in your room, but if you were like that in the mess you could feel an estrangement and suspicion immediately. Just a little odd, not quite a true stamping; and for that reason they rather avoided each other in the mess and were generally accepted as pretty good fellows. But it was often irritating to have to stand and pass banalities over a gin glass when you had something to say. They were enjoying themselves immensely.

"It's so pathetic this club business, flocking into bars where they'll meet the other chaps and almost be able to forget they're surrounded by foreigners. They can't even guess what they miss."

"Of course, we're not as cosmopolitan as all that since we met Peggy."

"No, I know, but still we do take her places, and there's always the day off."

"But it's all rather maddening, because I'm sure Poopsy will stay here for ever dreaming of tepid English beer and wet November days, while we'll be sent home to enjoy the climate."

"Um, and then it will all be reminiscing. Way up in the cold one'll be able to think of Lilli's hut at Sidi Bishr, and that poisonous brother and singing in the car."

By the outskirts of the town they had got on to the pictorial effects of photographs.

"Mine always look like 'A street scene in Alexandria,' or worse. Nothing artistic about it."

"Actually, I believe enlarging is what does it. Almost any picture gets impressive when it's big enough. I don't think there's anything special about those huge things on the photographer's walls."

The conversation gave way now to commentary on the procession of indolent, unaspiring life that overflows from every Arab street down the darkest alleys and stairways. Every characteristic was there, only too easily seen; a pageant of mortal wants and passions as sharply etched as their dependant shadows on the road. The range of their possessions, their clothes, their merchandise was not great: determined and fixed many centuries before. But all bear the patient individuality of their makers or possessors; they are as different as men's faces, as their walk, as their tempers. For instance, a tarboosh: the same tassel, the same colour, the same flower-pot shape as every other, but carefully steamed and fitted to its owner's head. They watched the tottering bales of cotton on loaded carts, the plunging mules galloping with empty ones, the spurt of water from a goatskin, the histrionic gestures, endlessly rehearsed, of blear-eyed beggars, and heard the dish-dish of lemonade sellers clapping their brass bowls like castanets. Both felt that this was living, and their delight was the more for being shared.

It was in this appreciative mood that they sensed the car check and saw a brown hand poking from its white sleeve, then waving them on. They were in the Boulevard Saad Zagloul already, and Hugh found he was entirely cheerful, even though he could not be with Peggy to-night. They got out, told the driver to be there at midnight, angled their caps and went into the hotel. Freddy stepped forward jauntily, "Miss Eglinton?"

"Yes, Captain, no—I give you." The porter found a crumpled envelope in the folds of something or other, and Freddy ripped it up with a drooping heart. He knew what it said before he opened it.

"She can't make it to-day; some sort of special duty." And slightly after, "Hell. What now?"

Hugh tried to look sympathetic, and only said: "Well, I was going to the Sporting Club for tennis with the Basket and a couple of twitties. Come along."

"Um—perhaps I will." They started towards the door and shouted "Gharry!"

"Er, I don't think I will, after all; I think I'll go and see the——"

Freddy's voice trailed right away in a mumble which meant nothing even to himself, and then, audibly: "Well, see you here at midnight."

Hugh climbed into the seat of the tilting gharry, "Sporting Abdul. Awam!"

The whip came down on bony flanks, the barely co-ordinated legs splayed out and the gharry rolled off. Freddy went back into the hall of the hotel and waited.

Hugh played very good tennis on a baked red court and went and had a shower. He sat in the shade of a wall in his bathing-dress smoking appreciatively and watching slender, arched figures diving. He tried to catch a movement in his sketch book, and then, propping his shoulders back against the wall, just went on watching. He wondered if there was anything more beautiful to see than a supple curving dive, or better to hear than the rattle of an empty spring-board.

He was especially aware of a pale-blue figure with a cap of the same colour who mounted the steps of the second highest dive quite solemnly, and suddenly flashed down to the water and was gone. There was something familiar in that poised head and easy grace: he flipped open the sketch-book and put in two or three lines. Looking up with a dissatisfied frown his unfocussed eyes rested on the edge of the bath nearest him. The blue water flopped and jumbled; it seemed above the level of the flat cement edging; and then a cap, a face, shoulders and brown arms moved up in the picture. He held back the first impulse to shout, and said, quite steadily: "Peggy! What a surprise!"

She hauled herself on to the cement, stood up, and walked across the grass with little rivulets sprawling down her thighs and legs.

"I never recognised you in that new blue. Is this what you call special duty?"

She looked rather worried.

"No, they finished with me early—always upsetting plans. Where's Freddy, though?"

"I don't know. I left him at the hotel—you could ring up."

"Um, I better had. What about tea? Have you had it?"

"Not yet. Run along like a good girl and ring him up. I'll order some. Iced coffee?"

"Please—I won't be a minute."

He watched her go with approbation, filled in several more lines pleasingly, and clapped his hands.

"Two iced coffees," he said, holding up fingers, "and Basir and the cakes."

She was soon back with her hair streaming. "Freddy's vanished."

Freddy had half-an-hour to fill in before midnight, so he went to the Excelsior. He still felt pricks of resentment. As he pushed his way towards the bar he saw Peggy and Hugh dancing. He turned very quickly and wandered back down the stairs, along the street to the hotel. The car was waiting.

They sat deeply in the corners of the back seat for several miles before Hugh said: "It was just your bad luck. You must see it was only that." But there was more than a barricade between them; there was a huge black gulf. Freddy's thoughts were so bitter that it was almost luxury to let them come streaming over his mind. He had found her, he had introduced her, he had been as generous as a human being could, and he had lost her. It did not then occur to him that he had also lost his greatest friend.

The road went on and on. Hugh seemed to be asleep in his corner; Freddy was indulging in the richest self-pity. He heard a faint shout, a crack, and the car braked slightly. "God! he's driven straight past the barrier; they must have shot at us. The driver's new, of course. We should have warned him." But they drove on without a word, and Hugh had not even woken up. That annoyed Freddy, too.

When the car stopped outside the officers' mess Freddy got out and told the driver about the barrier. His voice was sharp and bitter: "Well, for Christ's sake look out next time; you must be blind."

He turned into the door of the mess, shouting over his shoulder: "You'd better wake Mr. Paskins up."

He stopped and watched the driver get out, open the door and call his name. Then he shook him by the shoulder.

"I think there's something up with him, Sir."

Freddy turned back very reluctantly and shone his torch in Hugh's face. "Come on, for God's sake." As the beam dropped on to his chest Freddy saw the soaking patch of blood. He prayed vehemently for the earth to swallow him up.

THE END.

**All the characters and incidents in this story are imaginary.*

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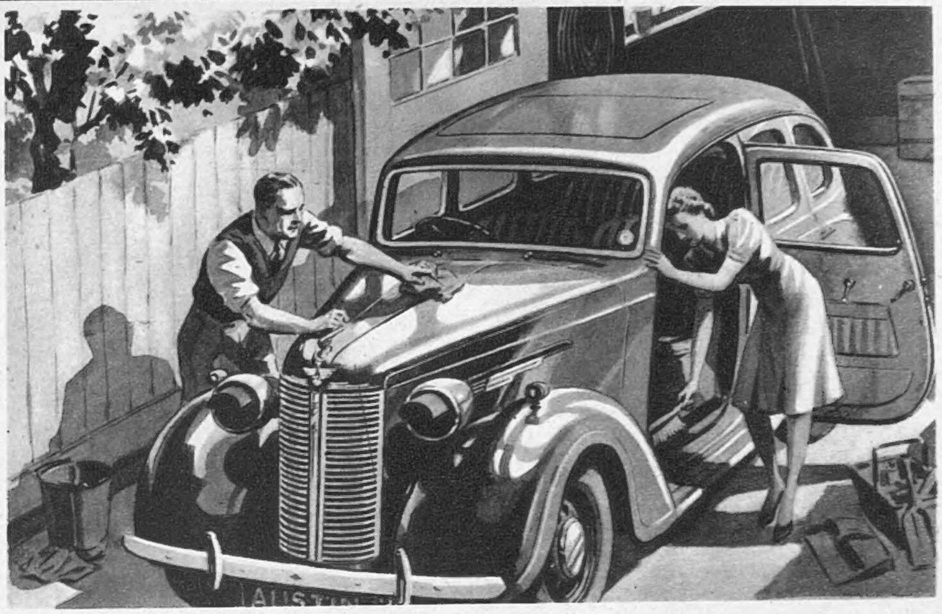

MORE THAN A BEAUTY TREATMENT

Even on war work, it's poor strategy to hide a good car under a bushel of dirt. Cellulose and plating must be clean to stay healthy. Both, today, are needed for war production. If, through neglect, coachwork has to be reconditioned, the materials and labour involved won't do the Country (or your pocket) any good. Wash coachwork when you can and apply reliable polish to put a protective film over the cellulose. Touch up blemishes at once —before the weather gets at them. Polish plated parts regularly and treat leather etc., with dressing.

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"SLOGAN" BLOUSES AND FROCKS

THERE is always something different to be found at Jacqmar's, 16, Grosvenor Street; the collection now to be seen is simple and, above all, practical. The jumper suit above on the left is of fancy crêpe; the two pieces may be worn separately, the coat looking well with a plain skirt, while the skirt may be accompanied with a variety of different tops. Furthermore, there are simple little printed frocks, the outfit being completed with a wide belt; these dresses are warmly to be recommended as they do not become easily crushed. By the way, it must be related, there is still a decided vogue for the "Slogan Scarf," many of which are made into dresses and blouses—among the new slogans are "Combined Operations," "Americans in London," "Don'ts." A feature is here made of semi-evening dresses, black being the favourite. The advance guard of the Autumn Travel Coats have arrived—they are classic in character and will remain undated.

IT is really a pleasure to visit the "Woolly Department" (heretofore it was known by the name of Sportswear) at Marshall and Snelgrove's (on the ground floor), Oxford Street. It is a fancy woolly jumper suit which is seen on the right; evidence to the fact that it is cheerful is that eight different shades are present in its composition. Furthermore, there are suits, the coats reinforced with deep white piqué revers; the arrangement of the neat pleats at the waist is very flattering to the figure. Generally speaking, the shoulders are square and the sleeves turn the elbow. Furthermore, there are coatees with waistcoat effect, fullness being introduced in the skirts. Now it is excellent news that there are a limited number of angora twin sets, jumper and cardigan. There really are no more useful accessories; they are cut on non-committal lines, therefore they remain undated indefinitely. Emphasis must be laid on the fact that there is a section for personal shoppers. There are golden opportunities for those who wish to save coupons.

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